



## Article 9: Allow Selectmen to Consider Waste Metering Approaches to Save Money and Reduce Trash

In 1990, Belmont residents passed an override to pay for trash services. A lot has changed in 27 years, and that override now stands in the way of the Town reducing trash and saving money. Since the waste contract usually gets bid every 5 years, this is a critical time to consider all options. **This non-binding resolution will have no immediate effect on the Town's trash services. This resolution updates the sense of the Town on this issue in order to inform the freedom of action the Selectmen can have in evaluating options for managing waste, including waste metering such as Pay As You Throw.** This resolution seeks to honor the old override while allowing the Town to improve upon our already successful trash and recycling services.

After 27 years, conditions change. Here are a few things to consider:

- At least 179 landfills accepted municipal trash in the 1990s; today there are 7
- The last incinerator built in MA opened 29 years ago
- The Town adopted a Climate Action Plan in 2009, but little progress has been made on it
- MA passed the Global Warming Solutions Act in 2008, and adopts a Solid Waste Master Plan every decade. Towns have been asked to reduce waste by 30% by 2020; Belmont is just half way there
- Belmont has seen an influx of hundreds of additional students for the past 6 years, increasing financial pressure on the Town
- Global temperatures continue to increase, sea ice is being lost, extreme weather is more common

How waste metering (where residents buy town bags to dispose of trash) can help Belmont at this time:

- Save Belmont up to 10% on its next 5 year waste contract
- Reduce our trash by at least 25%
- Reduce our carbon footprint by 4000 metric tons/yr of CO<sub>2</sub>; equivalent to over 4% of Belmont's home energy use
- Give residents more control over the spending on waste
- Reduce the risk of rising disposal fees, which historically increase at twice inflation
- If bag fee revenue is returned to homeowners, it will cost the average household nothing. If the Selectmen do not do this, the revenue would be invested in education, road repairs, etc.

By passing this non-binding resolution, you are asking the Board of Selectmen to consider all options, including Pay As You Throw in the upcoming waste contract, and telling them it's time to move forward from 1990. Voters did what was right for our Town in 1990, and they would want us to do the same now. Join us in telling the Selectmen that it's okay to consider improvements in trash services so we can reduce waste, save money and improve our environment.

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Sustainable Belmont held a panel discussion with experts on municipal waste in April. Visit [www.sustainablebelmont.org](http://www.sustainablebelmont.org) for meeting recording and slides

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